

BYRON L. DORGAN
NORTH DAKOTA
322 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3405
202-224-2551
202-224-9378 TDD

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
COMMERCE, SCIENCE & TRANSPORTATION
ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN, INDIAN AFFAIRS

CHAIRMAN, DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3405

January 11, 2008

STATE OFFICES:

312 FEDERAL BUILDING
THIRD AND ROSSER AVENUE
P.O. BOX 2579
BISMARCK, ND 58502
701-250-4618
1-800-686-4462 TOLL-FREE

1802 32ND AVENUE S., SUITE B
P.O. BOX 9060
FARGO, ND 58106
701-239-5389

102 NORTH 4TH STREET, ROOM 101
GRAND FORKS, ND 58201
701-746-8972

100 1ST STREET, S.W., ROOM 105
MINOT, ND 58701
701-852-0703

Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street Northwest
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary:

We have been waiting patiently for decades for the federal government to fulfill its promise made to the people of North Dakota during the construction of the Pick-Sloan project on the Missouri River.

The promise was this: We would allow the construction of a dam on the Missouri River in North Dakota, creating a permanent flood that inundated much of our land. In return, we would be able to move water throughout our state for our municipal, rural and industrial water needs, as well as for irrigation opportunities.

The permanent flood has come and stayed in our state, but the long-promised benefits have not been delivered. In a semi-arid state, the ability to move water for beneficial use is essential for economic growth. We are eager to receive the benefits promised us by the federal government those many decades ago.

This history is particularly important today because we are working on two major water projects that relate to those promises. One is aimed at moving water from the Missouri River basin to the Red River Valley. The second is the completion of the Northwest Area Water Supply system, or NAWS, which would bring a reliable supply of water to tens of thousands of North Dakotans. Both projects are critical to our state's future.

The government of Canada has expressed concern about both of these projects. Their main objection relates to issues resulting from an inter-basin transfer of water. Responding to that concern, the United States agreed to treat the water in order to avoid the introduction of invasive species – fish and other organisms – into the Hudson Bay drainage system.

Despite those assurances, the federal government of Canada, through its Ambassador to the United States, has recently written a letter to the U.S. Department of the Interior expressing opposition to the movement of Missouri River water to the Red River. In addition, the government of Canada has continued to express concern about the NAWS project.

I am writing today to request the State Department's engagement in consultations with the Canadian government to help us resolve these issues.

We believe that the concerns expressed by the Canadians can be addressed. Environmental impact statements for both of these projects have found that a water treatment plan can resolve these concerns. We need your help to consult with the Canadians and find a solution that will allow these important projects to move forward.

I will call you next week to follow up with this request, and I look forward to working with you to begin this process as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Byron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Byron L. Dorgan
U.S. Senator

BLD:cmd